

From: Steven W. Orr
To: Microsoft ATR
Date: 12/27/01 12:55pm
Subject: Please break Microsoft up.

They need to be broken up for all of the following reasons:

1. They insist on using proprietary file formats. Things like Word and Excel are just the tip of the iceberg.
2. Proprietary network protocols. Separate from proprietary file formats is the format of data used to communicate between different processes which might be on different computers. Microsoft is famous for trying to subvert well established protocols and changing them so that already running software will not work with their systems. At first blush, you might think they were just plain stupid, but in reality they are trying to prevent anyone from running any software at all unless it was purchased from them.
3. Bad security implementations. They insist on implementing their security protocols in a proprietary fashion. The end result is that it's impossible to evaluate how secure their systems really are unless someone figures out how to crack them. In fact, time and time again, their systems always turn out to be trivially crackable. And when it happens, they do not act in a timely fashion to fix the problem. All of the good security protocols are developed out in the open so people can see how they work.
4. They prevent people from being able to buy computers without their OS. I happen to run Unix systems. I would never be happy being forced to pay the extra Microsoft tax for software I don't want and would never use.
5. They engage in unfair business tactics. They are famous for their deceptive business practices. Little guys are routinely stepped upon and squashed.

And finally, their bad practices are impacting my personal ability to enjoy the services provided to me by others. One recent story I have for you concerns the cable modem I have at home to host my own personal domain. About 5 months ago when the Code Red virus struck, my ISP, RCN, as well as other major ISPs (like MediaOne) simply shut off port 80. They were well within their rights to do this for a number of reasons; the main one being that People are not allowed to run servers on a cable modem. The driving force here is that the Microsoft OS implementation is susceptible to virus in an era when all other OS's are not. The latest episode is that RCN has just shut off all access to all computers within their own router groups, just for the purpose of squashing yet another virus that affects the Microsoft OS.

Please help. This is what government is for.

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-Time flies like the wind. Fruit flies like a banana. Stranger things have -
-happened but none stranger than this. Does your driver's license say Organ
-Donor? Black holes are where God divided by zero. Listen to me! We are all-
-individuals! What if this weren't a hypothetical question? steveo@syslang.net